

## **Hurricane Harvey Response 2017 - Community Liaison (CL) Report**

TO: Janetta Coates and Mitty Mohon

FROM: David Bryan/Jeremy Ford/Devin Pollock/Jim Stevens

SUBJECT: Hurricane Harvey Response 2017

COUNTY: Jasper and Newton Counties

DATE: 9/21/17

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### **SUMMARY:**

Team Jasper/Newton member visited with the Emergency Operations Managers for Tyler and San Jacinto County today. Ken Jobe of Tyler County explained to us that there were some individuals who experienced flood damage but it was not widespread. He asked that we provide him with the material on private wells, model and household cleanup and other flood related material for those who might request it. We also met the local FEMA representative.

In San Jacinto County, we met with Matt Johnson, county emergency operations manager and were fortunate enough to also meet FEMA representatives who were working with the county to begin setting up a Disaster Response Center in the town of Coldspring, Texas. We were able to discuss with FEMA officials the possibility of hosting a table at the DRC to work directly with FEMA mitigation officials and combine messages to meet the needs of the local residents. Flyers and fact sheets were left for the county and possible discussions at a later date when the DRC is established in Coldspring.

Friday, the team will work with Co-Lead Mitty Mohon to brief oncoming Community Liaisons regarding lessons learned and best practices. We will also work with Co-Lead to notify contacts that teams are transitioning and provide them with Mitty's contact information.

The team also was asked by Newton County Precinct Commissioner Gary Formby if we had heard anything about possible community assistance on infrastructure. Roads, bridges and infrastructure continues to be a concern in both counties with many of the roads that are normally used for school bus routes in need of drastic repair after being washed out by extensive flooding. Temporary fixes still provide safety concerns, especially when washed out roads have holes that require 10-15 dump trucks of rock to make them passable. As part of our transition, it would be prudent if we were able to give him a direct FEMA contact but will also make arrangements for a community liaison or Co-Lead to be available to discuss this issue and ensure it gets elevated.

### **QUESTIONS/COMMENTS**

The Health Department still would like any information regarding private aerobic treatment

**systems.** It is my understanding that Robert Houston in Region 6 was probably the appropriate contact. The systems we are talking about are private systems on private property. They have questions regarding how to decontaminate systems that failed during the storm and flooding. The question is whether EPA or TCEQ have documents explaining how to get the aerobic systems up and running properly after they were contaminated by flood water.

## **COMMUNITY CONCERNS**

- Debris is still piled along the streets and roads throughout both counties. We have not heard confirmation on whether a contract has been let by the counties to pick up debris. It also does not appear that debris is being segregated from building and construction debris.
- Questions remain regarding hazardous waste being reported throughout the county that needs to be investigated, possibly by EPA CLs.
- Newton County Precinct Commissioner Gary Formby is still seeking information about possible community assistance on infrastructure. Roads, bridges and infrastructure continues to be a concern in both Newton and Jasper counties with many of the roads that are normally used for school bus routes in need of drastic repair after being washed out by extensive flooding. Temporary fixes still provide safety concerns, especially when washed out roads have holes that require 10-15 dump trucks of rock to make them passable. As part of our transition, it would be prudent if we were able to give him a direct FENA contact but will also make arrangements for a community liaison or Co-Lead to be available to discuss this issue and ensure it gets elevated.

## **TEAM CONCERNS**

- Old-fashioned paper road maps have proved necessary in rural areas where there is little, sporadic or no wireless cell phone coverage.
- Team Jasper/Newton will be demobilizing end-of-day Friday and leaving on a jet plane Saturday morning. Plans are to put together information on Jasper, Newton, Sabine, Tyler and San Jacinto counties that can be useful for EPA Community Liaison teams going forward.

As always, thanks for listening and your possible attention to these issues.

David, Jim, Jeremy and Devin